



Understanding Farm Households: The New Census of Agriculture

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Agricultural households differ in the extent to which the farm provides a living.

- **Some entirely rely on farm income**
- **Some earn income from other sources**
 - Off-farm employment**
 - Nonfarm business self-employment**
 - Transfer income**
 - Other forms of ‘passive’ income**
- **Some even share net farm income with other households**



Wide variety of farm household and farm ownership arrangements influences:

- **Who makes farm decisions**
- **Who works on the farm**
- **How farm operation costs, earnings and wealth are shared**



2002 Census of Agriculture provides:

- **Expanded demographic data for all farm operators**
- **Multiple job-holding on and off the farm for all farm operators**
- **Income sharing relationships across households**



Three key questions explored:

- Who is involved in the farm operation beyond the traditional ‘principal operator’?
- Are those engaged in farming as operators engaged in other paid work?
- Does income earned from farming accrue to a single or to multiple households?



Question 1:

Who is involved in farm beyond the traditional ‘principal operator’?

- **How many ‘other operators’ are there?**
- **What are their characteristics?**



Average age of principal farm operator in Census of Agriculture:

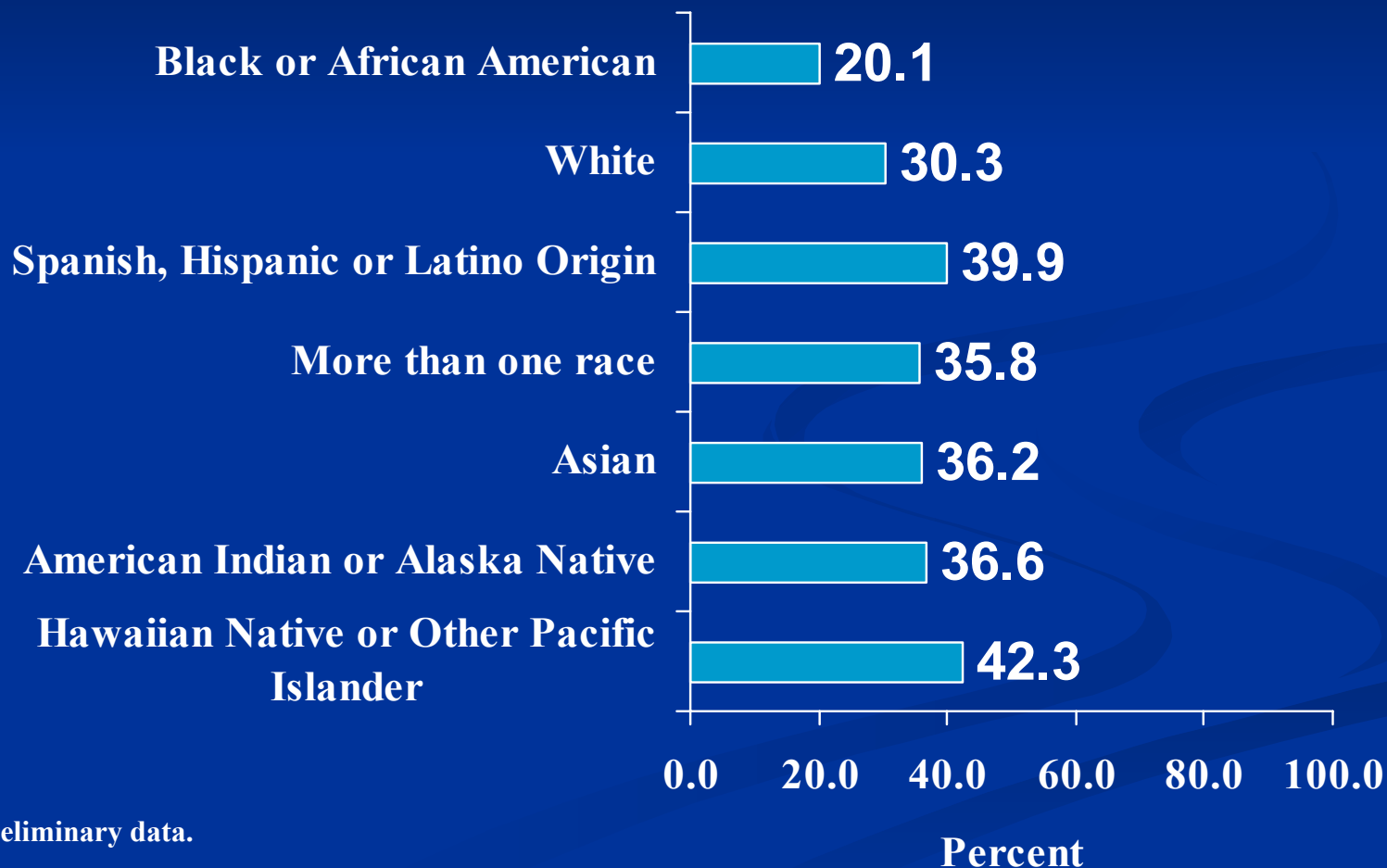
2002: 55.3 years

1997: 54.0 years

**Percent of principal farm operators
living more than 10 years on same farm:
72.1 percent**

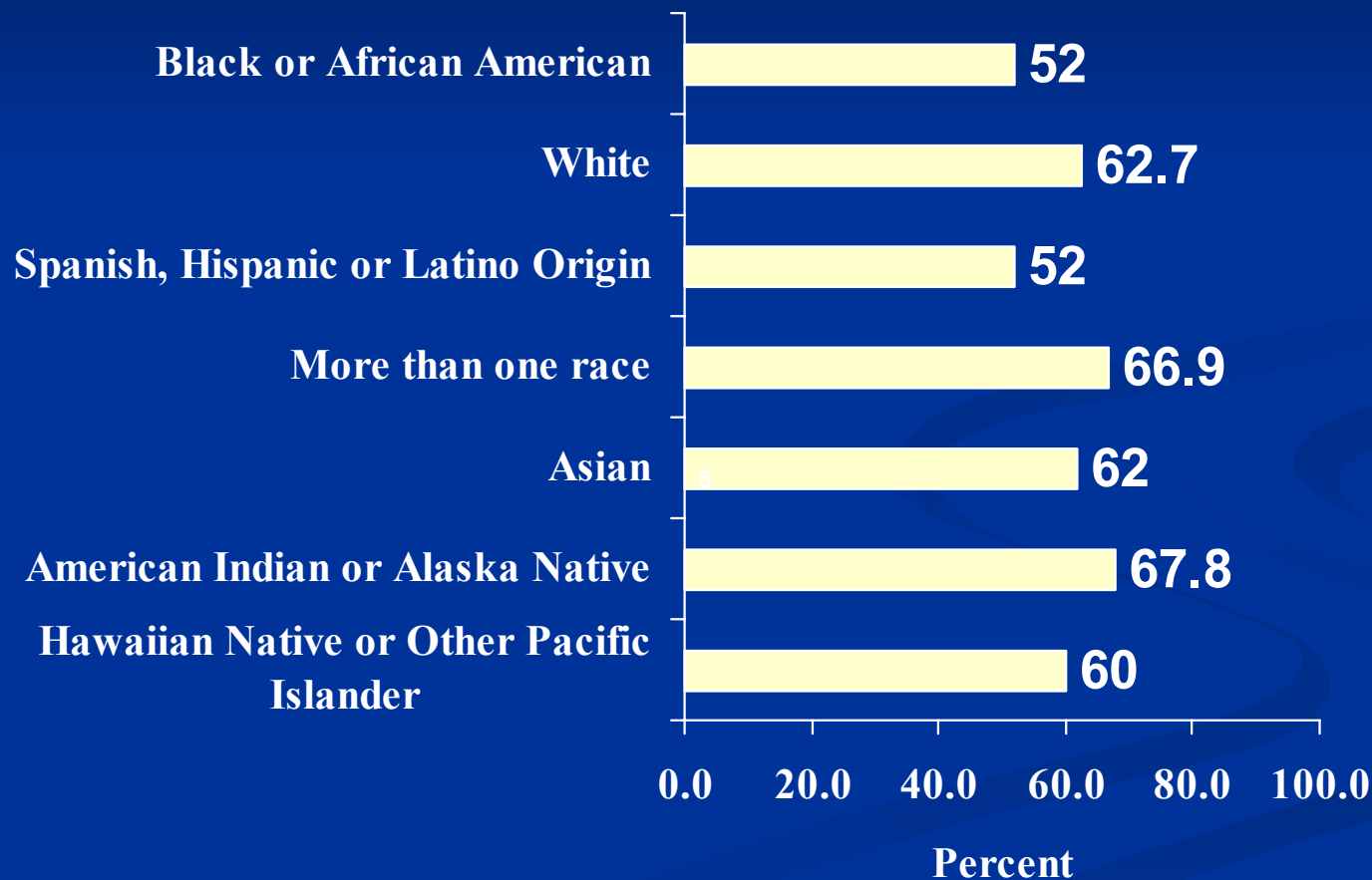


U.S. Farm Operators Who Are Not Principal Farm Operators, 2002 Census of Agriculture^a





Farm Women as Portion of Other Farm Operators, 2002 Census of Agriculture^a



^aPreliminary data.

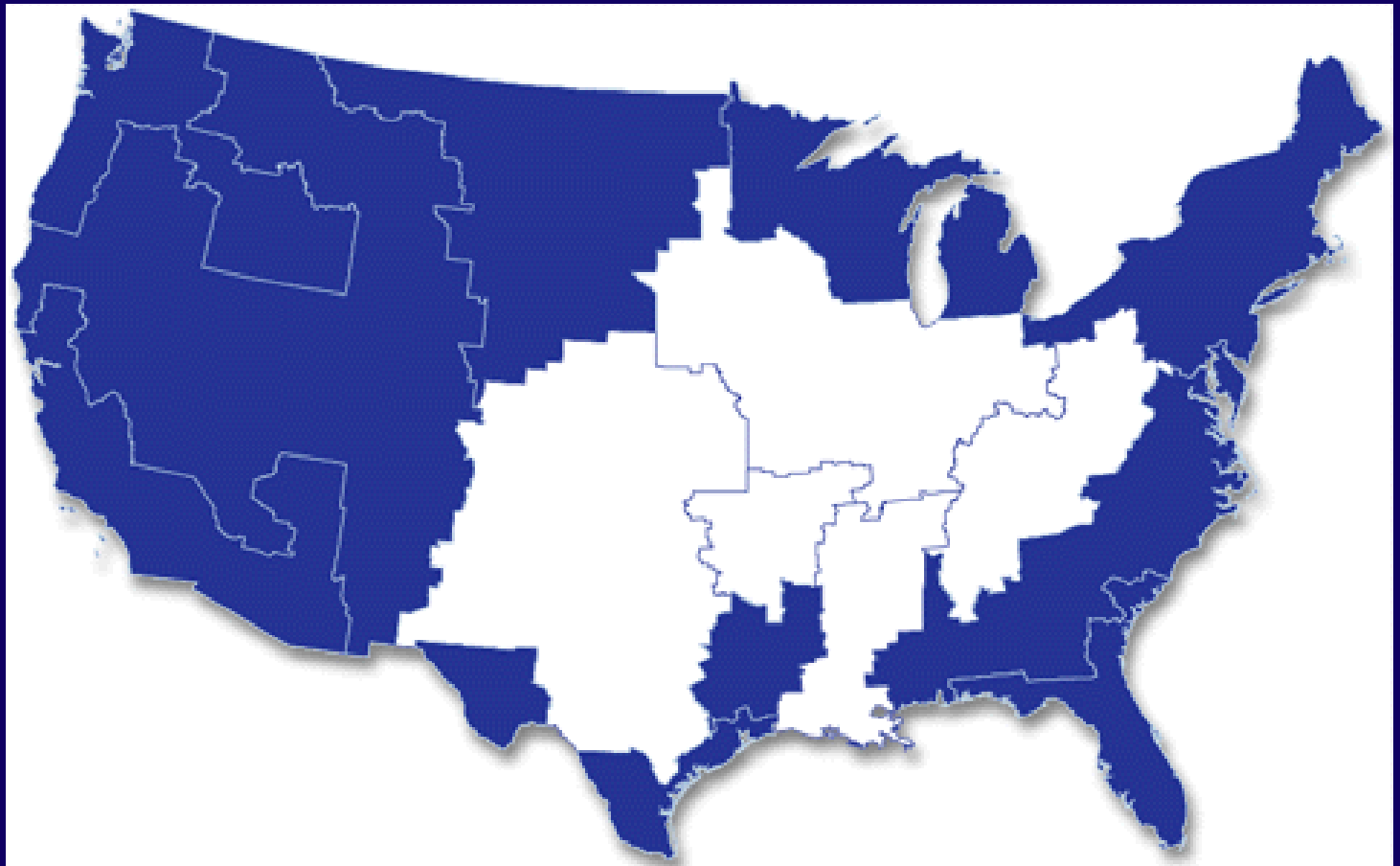


Penn State Survey of U.S. Farm Women found that 53% of farm women in the U.S. considered themselves as “the main operator or one of the main operators” of the farm.



Specific Roles

	<u>%</u>
1. Principal farm operator	9.6
2. Full agricultural partner	30.8
3. Business manager	7.2
4. Agricultural helper	33.0
5. No involvement	19.4

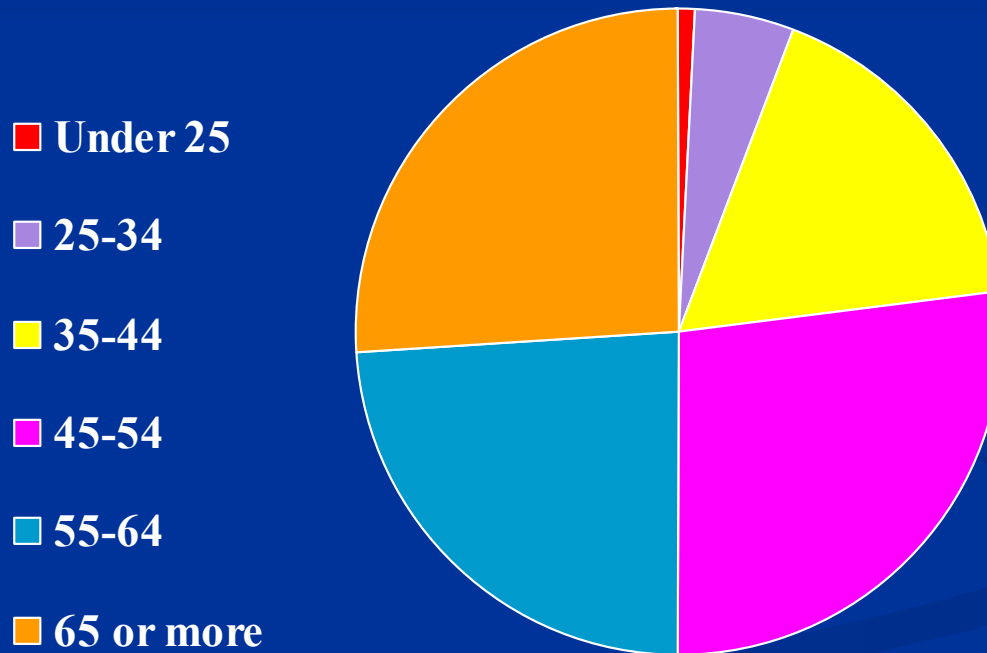


U.S. Farm Women as Main Farm Operators*

*higher concentrations in blue



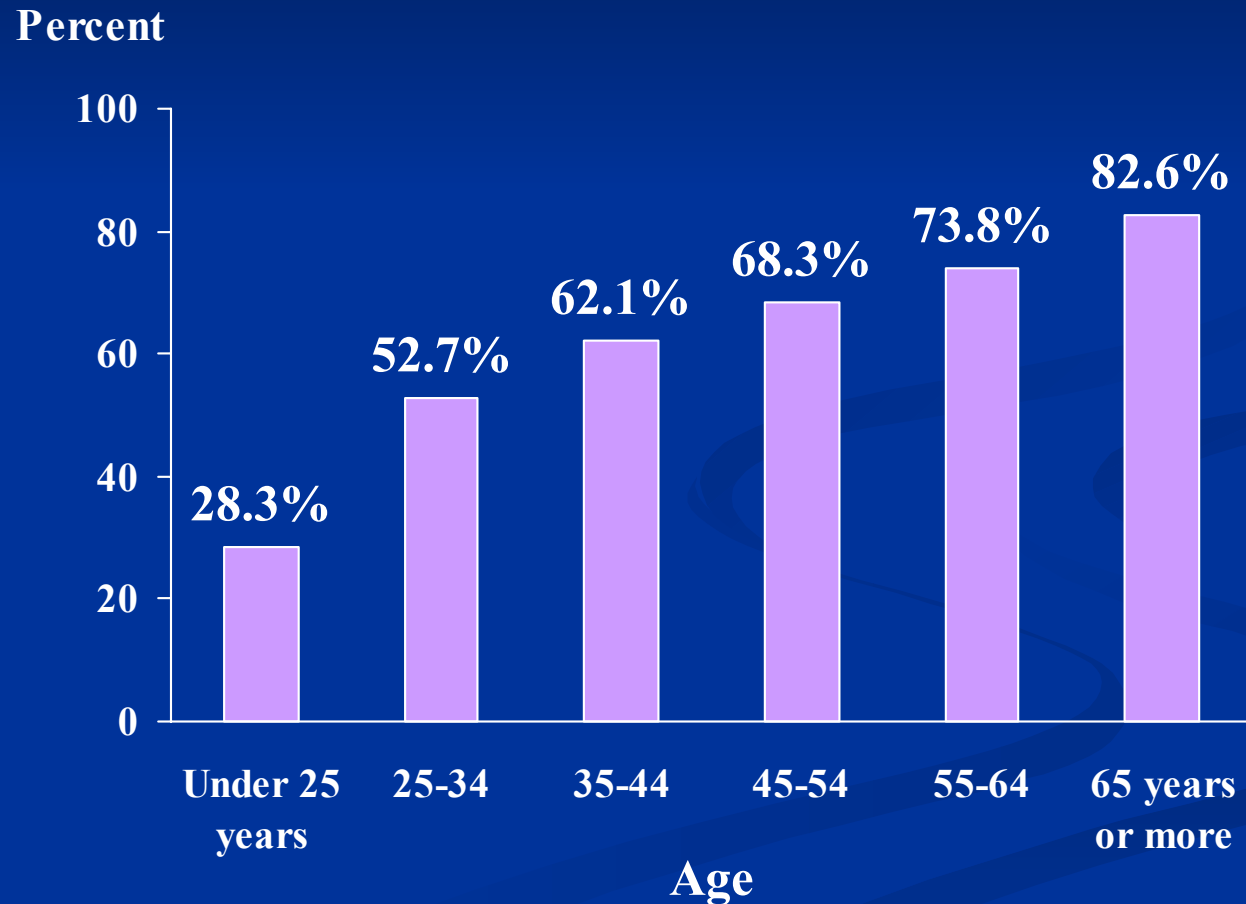
Age Structure of U.S. Principal Farm Operators, 2002 Census of Agriculture^a



^aPreliminary data.



Total Farm Operators Classified As Principal Operators, 2002^a



^aPreliminary data, 2002 Census of Agriculture.



Question 2:

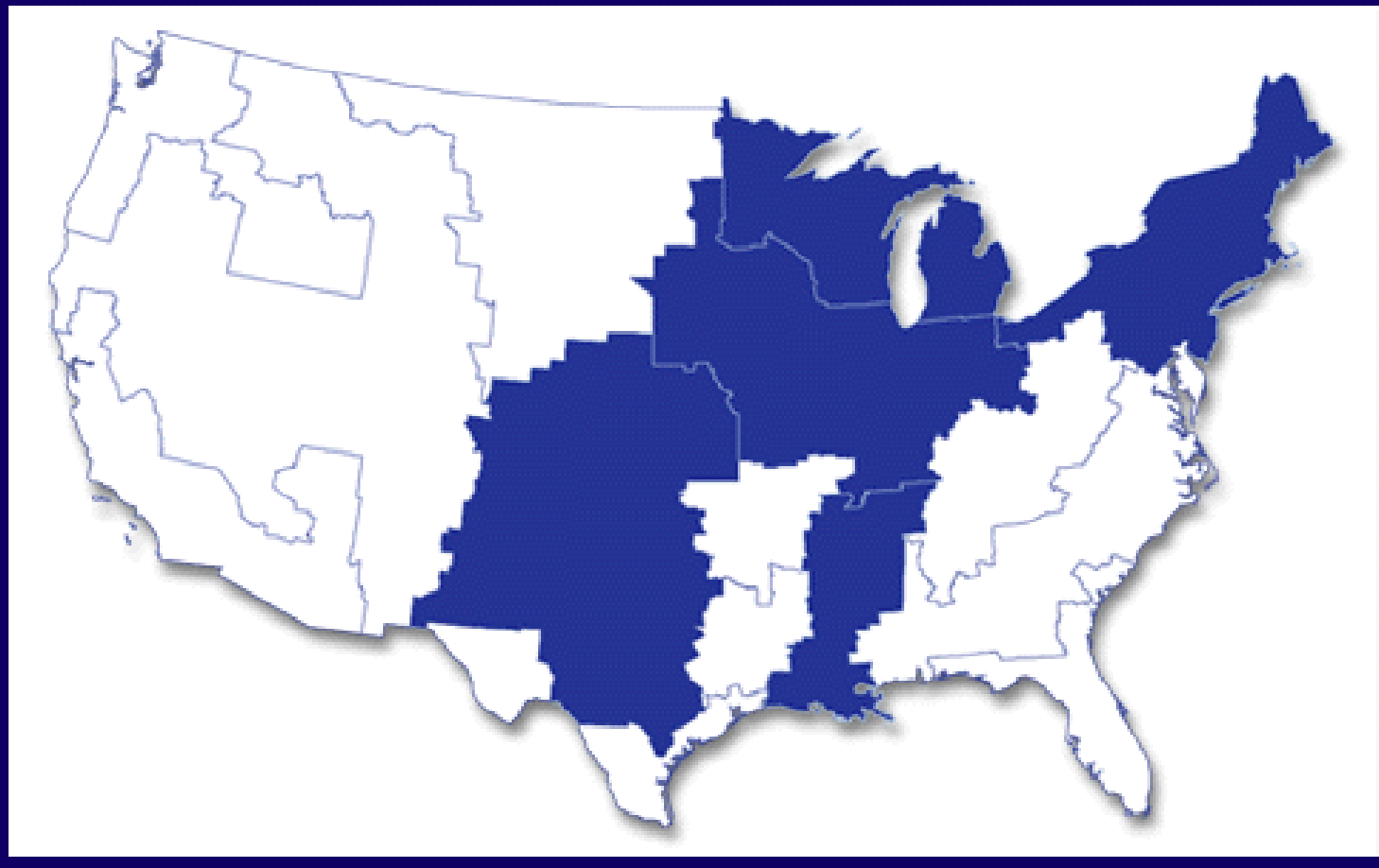
Are those engaged in farming as farm operators engaged in other paid work?



Change in Off-farm Employment, 1980-2001

% off-farm
employment



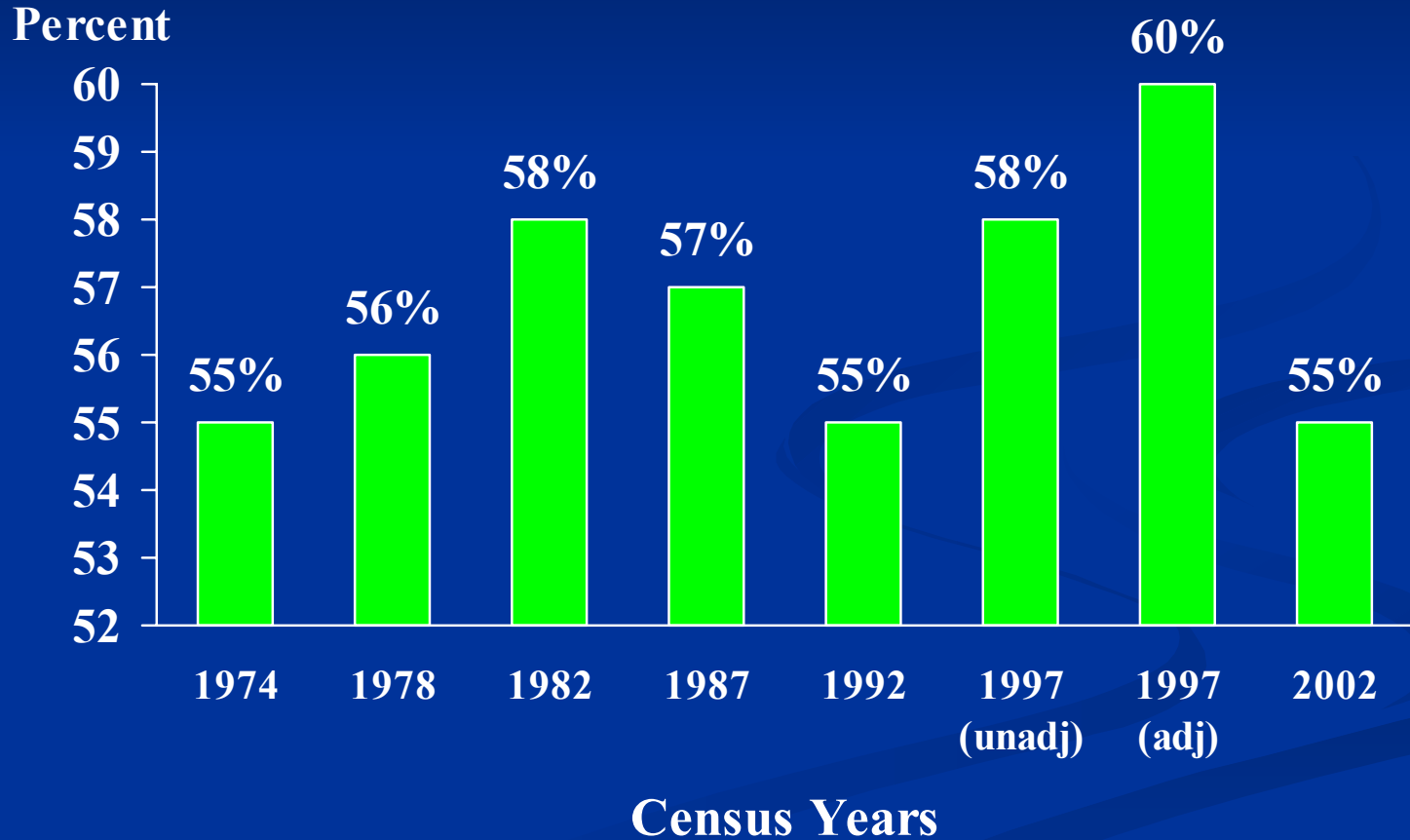


Off-farm Employment of U.S. Farm Women*

*higher concentrations in blue



Principal Farm Operators Also Employed at Another Job, 2002 Census of Agriculture



^aPreliminary data, 2002 Census of Agriculture.



200 or more days working off-the farm by principal operator in 2002:

- **39.08% for all principal farm operators**
- **71.34% for all principal farm operators reporting work off the farm**



For women principal farm operators:

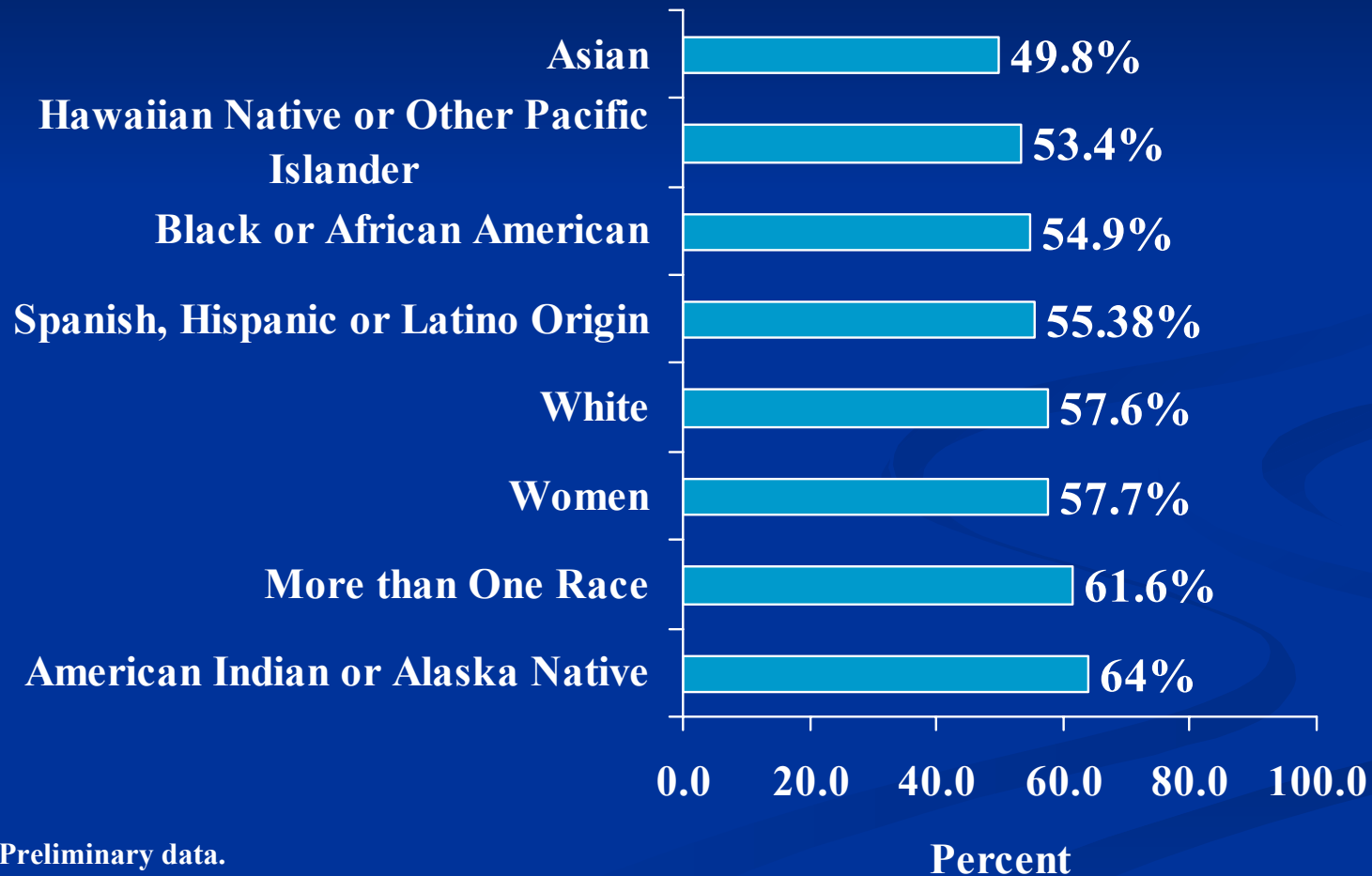
- **About as likely to work off-farm**
- **Less likely to work 200 days or more**

For Spanish, Hispanic or Latino Origin principal farm operators:

- **More likely to work off-farm**
- **Less likely to work 200 days or more, if working**



Other Farm Operators Who Are Employed Off-farm, 2002





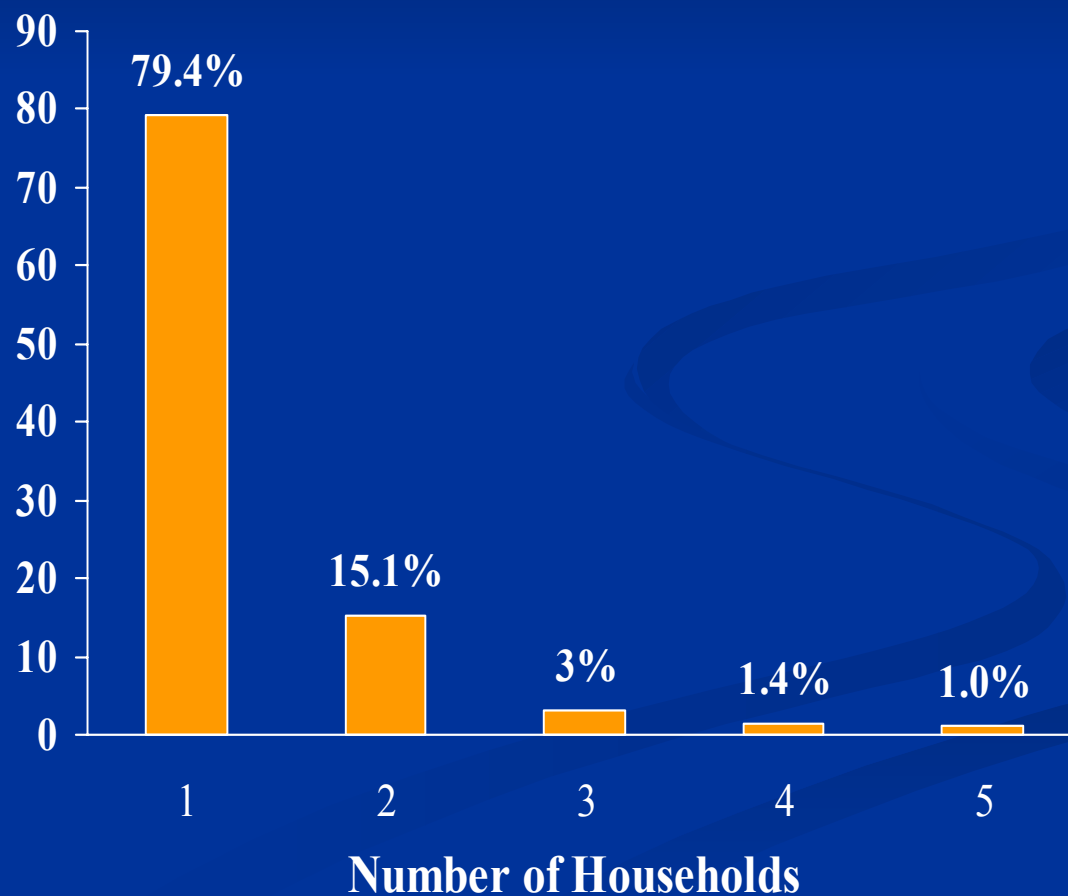
Question 3:

Is the income earned from the farm operation accrue to only one household?



Sharing of Net Income of Farm Across Numbers of Households, 2002

Percent
U.S. Farms



^aPreliminary data.



**Observations: 2002 Census of
Agriculture provides answers to new
questions of policy relevance.**



- 1. Fuller accounting of labor resources on farms**
- 2. Age distribution of farm operators**
- 3. Prevalence of traditionally underrepresented groups**
- 4. Extent of interactions with nonfarm labor markets**
- 5. Sharing of farm household resources across households**